

IN THE CLAIMS

1-53. (Canceled).

54. (Previously Presented) A guide wire as claimed in claim 70 in which the major flat surfaces of the distal portion define a central major plane located midway between the major surfaces, and the minor surfaces of the distal portion define a central minor plane located midway between the minor surfaces.

55. (Previously Presented) A guide wire as claimed in claim 70 in which a reinforcing member is located on each major flat surface.

56. Canceled.

57. (Previously Presented) A guide wire as claimed in claim 54 in which the reinforcing member extends parallel to the central minor plane.

58. (Previously Presented) A guide wire as claimed in claim 54 in which the reinforcing member extends at an angle greater than zero degrees to the central minor plan.

59. (Previously Presented) A guide wire as claimed in claim 77 in which the reinforcing member defines opposite longitudinally extending sides, the opposite longitudinally extending sides of the reinforcing member terminating along the longitudinally extending edge of the reinforcing member.

60. (Previously Presented) A guide wire as claimed in claim 59 in which the opposite longitudinally extending sides of the reinforcing member are parallel to each other

61. (Previously Presented) A guide wire as claimed in claim 70 in which the reinforcing member is integrally formed with the distal portion of the guide wire.

62. (Previously Presented) A guide wire as claimed in claim 70 in which the distal portion of the guide wire extends through a sleeve, and a first securing means at the distal end thereof secures the distal portion to the sleeve, the first securing means defining a distal end of the guide wire.

63. (Previously Presented) A guide wire as claimed in claim 62 in which the first securing means is shaped to form a dome shaped distal end of the guide wire for facilitating passage of the guide wire smoothly through a vessel of the subject.

64. (Previously Presented) A guide wire as claimed in claim 62 characterized in which the guide portion is located between the reinforcing member and the first securing means.

65. (Previously Presented) A guide wire as claimed in claim 62 in which the first securing means comprises one of a solder joint, an adhesive joint, or a brazed joint.

66. (Previously Presented) A guide wire as claimed in claim 62 in which the sleeve extends in a proximal direction beyond the proximal end of the distal portion along a portion of the guide wire, and a proximal end of the sleeve is secured to the guide wire by a second securing means comprising one of an adhesive joint, a solder joint, or a brazed joint.

67. (Previously Presented) A guide wire as claimed in claim 70 in which the guide wire is substantially torsionally rigid between the distal portion and the proximal portion of the guide wire for minimizing axial twisting of the guide wire between the proximal portion thereof and the guide portion.

68. Canceled.

69. (Previously Presented) In combination a catheter and the guide wire as claimed in claim 7

70. (Currently Amended) A guide wire for use in a surgical or other procedure for accessing a remote site in a body of a human or animal subject, the guide wire defining a longitudinally extending axis, and terminating at one end in a proximal portion, and at an axially opposite end in a distal portion for accessing the remote site, the distal portion having a proximal end and a distal end, and being of rectangular transverse cross-section defining a pair of opposite major flat surfaces, joined by a pair of opposite minor surfaces, and terminating adjacent the distal end thereof in a guide portion, the guide portion being adapted to be shaped to a desired curved configuration for facilitating guiding of the guide wire into a branched vessel of the subject, and an elongated reinforcing member located on the distal portion of the guide wire for minimizing axial twisting of the distal portion between the proximal end of the distal portion and the guide

portion thereof, reinforcing member having a proximal end and a distal end, and extending along and being perpendicular to one of the flat major surfaces of the distal portion of the guide wire from the proximal end of the distal portion to a location on the distal portion axially spaced apart from the distal end of the distal portion to define with the distal end of the distal portion the guide portion.

71. (Previously Presented) A guide wire as claimed in claim 70 in which the reinforcing member extends in a generally axial direction.

72. (Previously Presented) A guide wire as claimed in claim 70 in which the major flat surfaces of the distal portion converge towards each other towards the distal end of the distal portion.

73. (Previously Presented) A guide wire as claimed in claim 54 in which the reinforcing member coincides with the central minor plane.

74. (Previously Presented) A guide wire as claimed in claim 70 in which the reinforcing member extends adjacent one of the minor surfaces.

75. (Previously Presented) A guide wire as claimed in claim 59 in which the opposite longitudinally extending sides of the reinforcing member converge towards the longitudinally extending edge of the reinforcing member for defining the longitudinally extending edge as a longitudinally extending ridge.

76. (Previously Presented) A guide wire as claimed in claim 59 in which the longitudinally extending edge of the reinforcing member converges towards the distal portion adjacent the distal end of the reinforcing member.

77. (Previously Presented) A guide wire as claimed in claim 70 in which the reinforcing member extends from the major flat surface of the distal portion of the guide wire to a longitudinally extending edge, the longitudinally extending edge extending from the proximal end of the reinforcing member to the distal end of the reinforcing member.

78. (New) A guide wire for use in a surgical or other procedure for accessing a remote site in a body of a human or animal subject, the guide wire defining a longitudinally extending axis, and terminating at one end in a proximal portion, and at an axially opposite end in a distal portion for accessing the remote site, the distal portion having a proximal end and a distal end, and being of rectangular transverse cross-section defining a pair of opposite major flat surfaces, joined by a pair of opposite minor surfaces, the minor surfaces defining a central minor plane midway between the minor surfaces, and the major flat surfaces terminating adjacent the distal end thereof in a guide portion, the guide portion being adapted to be shaped to a desired curved configuration for facilitating guiding of the guide wire into a branched vessel of the subject, and an elongated reinforcing member located on the distal portion of the guide wire for minimizing axial twisting of the distal portion between the proximal end of the distal portion and the guide portion thereof, reinforcing member having a proximal end and a distal end, and extending along, and being perpendicular to, one of the flat major surfaces of the distal portion of the guide wire and extending from the proximal end of the distal portion to a location on the distal portion axially spaced apart from the distal end of the distal portion to define with the distal end of the distal portion the guide portion.

79. (New) A guide wire as claimed in claim 78 in which the reinforcing member extends in a generally axial direction.

80. (New) A guide wire as claimed in claim 78 in which the major flat surfaces of the distal portion converge towards each other towards the distal end of the distal portion.

81. (New) A guide wire as claimed in claim 78 in which the reinforcing member extends adjacent one of the minor surfaces.

82. (New) A guide wire as claimed in claim 59 in which the opposite longitudinally extending sides of the reinforcing member converge towards the longitudinally extending edge of the reinforcing member for defining the longitudinally extending edge as a longitudinally extending ridge.

83. (New) A guide wire as claimed in claim 59 in which the longitudinally extending edge of the reinforcing member converges towards the distal portion adjacent the distal end of the reinforcing member.

84. (New) A guide wire as claimed in claim 78 in which the reinforcing member extends from the major flat surface of the distal portion of the guide wire to a longitudinally extending edge, the longitudinally extending edge extending from the proximal end of the reinforcing member to the distal end of the reinforcing member.

85. (New) A guide wire as claimed in claim 78 in which the reinforcing member defines a central plane which coincides with the central minor plane.